

Office of the United States Attorney  
Southern District of California  
San Diego, California  
U.S. Attorney Gregory A. Vega

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
June 21, 2000**

### **NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY – June 19, 2000**

Gregory A. Vega, United States Attorney for the Southern District of California, announced the sentencing today of Jose Armando Garcia on charges of conspiring to bring in, transport and harbor undocumented aliens from Mexico into the United States. Garcia had previously pleaded guilty on March 16, 2000. United States District Judge Judith N. Keep sentenced Jose Armando Garcia to 87 months in custody, as well as a \$25,000 fine, stating that Garcia was the leader of the largest alien smuggling organization she had ever seen.

Garcia was one of 26 individuals indicted in July 1999, as a result of a seven-year investigation targeting the Peralta alien smuggling organization. The investigation was conducted by a task force comprised of the United States Border Patrol and Federal Bureau of Investigation in San Diego, and the Immigration and Naturalization Service in Los Angeles. This investigation involved the use of wire and electronic interception along with other sophisticated investigative techniques.

United States Attorney Gregory A. Vega commented that, "This case represents an unprecedented cooperative effort between multiple agencies and jurisdictions to take down a large-scale alien smuggling enterprise." This case involved defendants that were arrested throughout the Western United States including San Diego, Los Angeles, San Francisco, California, and Phoenix, Arizona. Mr. Vega also stated that, "the wide-ranging nature of this investigation will not only prevent thousands of undocumented aliens from being smuggled in the future, but demonstrated the impact that this type of cooperative effort can have on even the most sophisticated of smuggling organizations."

Johnny Williams, Western Regional Director, Immigration and Naturalization Service said, "I want to congratulate all the men and women who joined forces to make this investigation a success, and to thank U.S. Attorney Vega and his staff for making the prosecution of these smugglers, who traffic in human misery, a top priority. This case shows that by working together we can see these vicious criminals brought to justice."

Jose Ismael Peralta and Vincente Peralta were also indicted as a result of this investigation and currently remain as fugitives.

### **DEFENDANT**

Jose Armando Garcia

### **SUMMARY OF CHARGES**

Title 8, United States Code, Section 1234  
(Conspiracy to bring in, transport, and harbor undocumented aliens)

### **PARTICIPATING AGENCIES**

United States Border Patrol (San Diego)  
Federal Bureau of Investigation (San Diego)  
Immigration and Naturalization Service (Los Angeles)